

## **The ‘Making’ of the East Coker Neighbourhood Plan**

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*Ward Member(s)* East Coker; Cathy Bakewell; Gina Seaton  
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### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To note the result of the Referendum in relation to the East Coker Neighbourhood Plan and to confirm that the Plan be ‘made’ (or adopted).

### **Forward Plan**

2. This report appeared on the District Executive Forward Plan with an anticipated Committee date of December 2018.

### **Public Interest**

3. The Neighbourhood Plan represents the views of East Coker Parish Council and other stakeholders on the preferred approach to future development in the settlement. This has been the subject of Independent Examination by a qualified person and proceeded to a Referendum by the local electorate, with the result being one in favour of the Plan. Once the making of the Plan is confirmed by the District Council, it will become part of the Statutory Development Plan with equal status to the Local Plan and will be used in the determination of planning applications.
4. The Neighbourhood Plan has been the subject of resident surveys, public meetings and consultation events; and the Parish Council have a dedicated section on its website in association with this process. [Neighbourhood Plan | East Coker Parish Council](#)

### **Recommendation**

5. That the District Executive agrees to the making of the East Coker Neighbourhood Plan.

### **Background**

6. Neighbourhood planning aims to help local communities play a direct role in planning the areas in which they live and work. The plan can show how the community wants land to be used and developed in its area.
7. The East Coker Neighbourhood Area designation was approved by the District Council in September 2013. Since then, the Neighbourhood Plan for the area was prepared and a ‘Pre-Submission’ Plan consulted upon in January- March 2017 (Regulation 14). This was followed by formal submission of the Plan in March 2018 and the District Council carried out consultation in line with procedures set out in the relevant Regulations (Regulation 16). The Plan was then the subject of independent examination and the District Council agreed on 6<sup>th</sup> September with the Examiner’s recommendations for Proposed Modifications and that the next step should be a local referendum.
8. The Referendum took place on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2018, with 426 votes cast. Of these, 352 voted in favour of the Plan, with 74 against. The Plan can therefore now be ‘made’ (or adopted). Once confirmed, it will have equal status to the Local Plan and be part of the Statutory Development Plan.

Planning applications are determined by local planning authorities in accordance with the adopted development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. A development plan sets out the planning policies for the development and use of land.

## **The East Coker Neighbourhood Plan**

9. The East Coker Neighbourhood Plan sets out a vision for the Parish and the Plan's main objectives. The Plan summarises the consultation process and evidence base informing its preparation; and policies seeking to guide future development in the Parish relating to Housing, Employment and Business, Traffic Transport and Infrastructure, Community Services and facilities; and Built and Natural Environment. It also covers Implementation, Monitoring and Review.

10. The Neighbourhood Plan's objectives are set out follows~;

Housing Objective - To encourage the delivery of housing which meets local need, including affordable housing, and provide everyone in the community with the opportunity to live in an appropriate home.

Employment Objective - To support the retention, improvement and expansion of existing employment space and encourage a range of further businesses, including home-working.

Transport Objective - To work with the Highway Authority to ensure that transport and movement within the Parish is appropriate and safe and to retain, promote and improve the network of footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths.

Community Objective - To provide and support the retention of a range of service and community facilities supporting sustainable growth.

Recreation Objective - To protect open space, sport and recreation facilities to promote healthy lifestyles and the well-being of residents in the Parish.

Conservation Objective - To support the retention and enhancement of the existing Conservation Areas in East & North Coker.

Design Objective - To secure good design in new development, and to protect, enhance and invest in the natural and built environment through a range of local projects and improvements.

Landscape Objective - To secure the protection, enhancement and interpretation of the distinctive rural landscape, settlement pattern, historical assets, natural environment and biodiversity of the Parish.

Agricultural Objective - Protect high grade agricultural land in order to increase sustainability of food supplies.

11. The Examiner's Report concluded that the correct procedure for the preparation and submission of the East Coker Neighbourhood Plan was followed and that it meets the 'Basic Conditions', subject to several Proposed Modifications being made. The Plan, supporting documents and representations received are all available on the District Council's website – [South Somerset District Council - East Coker Parish Neighbourhood Area Designation](#)

12. The District Council has accepted the Examiner's recommendations and a local Referendum was held on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2018. The prescribed question that was asked was

*"Do you want South Somerset District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for East Coker to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area".*

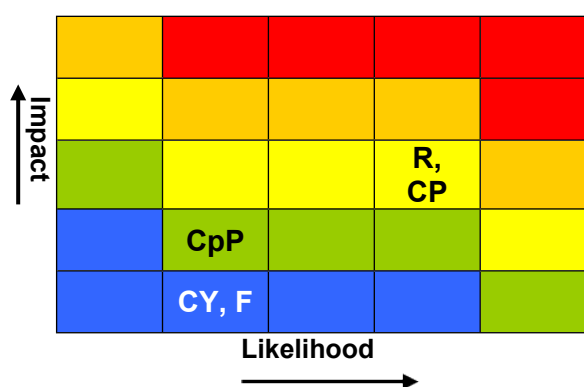
More than 50% of those who voted said ‘Yes’, so the Neighbourhood Plan can now be ‘made’.

## Financial Implications

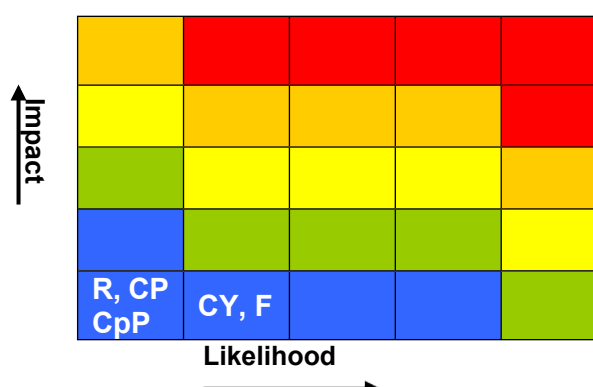
13. Under the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations, 15% of Community Infrastructure Levy receipts are generally passed directly to those parish and town councils (in England) where development has taken place. In England, communities that draw up a neighbourhood plan and secure the consent of local people in a referendum, will benefit from 25% of the levy revenues arising from the development that takes place in their area.
14. The Council is able to claim a grant of up to £20,000 from the Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government towards the costs of progressing the Neighbourhood Plan once the date of the Referendum had been set. A claim will be made in relation to that at East Coker once the next submission is open.
15. There is no SSDC funding involved in the recommendation specifically referred to in this report.

## Risk Matrix

**Risk Profile before officer recommendations**



**Risk Profile after officer recommendations**



## Key

Categories	Colours (for further detail please refer to Risk management strategy)
R = Reputation	Red = High impact and high probability
CpP = Corporate Plan Priorities	Orange = Major impact and major probability
CP = Community Priorities	Yellow = Moderate impact and moderate probability
CY = Capacity	Green = Minor impact and minor probability
F = Financial	Blue = Insignificant impact and insignificant probability

## Council Plan Implications

16. The Neighbourhood Plan accords with the Council’s aims to increase the focus on jobs and economic development, protect and enhance the quality of our environment; and to enable housing to meet all needs. The District Council’s values include supporting people and communities, enabling them to help themselves; and the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by the local community who wish to have an influence on future development in the town. The Council Plan states that it will focus on supporting communities to develop local, parish and neighbourhood plans.

## **Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications**

17. The East Coker Neighbourhood Plan does not directly address carbon emissions or climate change and no such issues arise.

## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

18. No significant changes to a Service, Policy or Strategy are proposed directly and it is therefore not necessary that an Equality Assessment is undertaken.

## **Privacy Impact Assessment**

19. No personal data handling is involved.

## **Background Papers**

The East Coker Neighbourhood Plan Referendum Report to District Executive – September 2018

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